AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph on page 3, lines 29-35 with the following:

B1

According to another characteristic, the oligonucleotide according to the invention is characterized in that it comprises the sequence 5' TTAGTTCTTAGTT N_3TTAGTT 3' (Seq ID 17), in which A represents adenine, T represents thymine, G represents guanine and C represents cytosine, and in which N_3 may signify A, T, C or G.

Please delete the paragraphs from page 4, line 32 to page 5, line 25.

Please replace the paragraph on page 8, lines 13-17 with the following:

B2

In particular, for the purpose of the present invention, those oligonucleotides in which the nucleotide sequences correspond to the formula 5' TTAGTTCTTAGTT N_3TTAGTT 3' (Seq ID 17), in which N_3 represents A, T, C or G, are preferred.

Please replace the paragraph on page 12, lines 1-6 with the following:

B3

An oligonucleotide 3Db(S), the sequence of which is identified in patent application WO96/02555 under SEQ ID NO. 15 (5' GAGAACGCTCGACCTTCGAT 3' identified herein as Seq ID 18), is also prepared; this oligonucleotide comprises phosphorothioate bonds throughout its length and is used as a positive control.

Please replace the paragraph on page 13, lines 9-17 with the following:

B4

The results obtained for each of the oligonucleotides tested ~~are represented on figures 1 and 2, which indicate, for each oligonucleotide tested, the number of counts per minute; it is noted~~ show that all the nucleotides according to the invention have a result which is clearly greater than the result obtained with the medium alone or the negative control A15(S), which means that they are all capable of stimulating lymphocyte proliferation.

Please replace the paragraph on page 13, line 27 to page 14, line 11 with the following:

B5

The cells are then distributed into 12-well plates in a volume of 2 ml, *i.e.*, $4x10^6$ cells/well. An amount of oligonucleotides to be tested prepared in Example 1 (1 oligonulceotide/well) which is sufficient to obtain a 2 ΩM oligonucleotide concentration is added to each well. The cells are then incubated for 72 hours at 37°C. The cells are then double-labeled using CD25PE/CD20FITC or CD86PE/CD20FITC, followed by analysis on a FACScan. ~~The results obtained are illustrated on figures 3, 4, 5, and 6, which represent, for each oligonucleotide~~

~~tested, the percentage of B cells (CD20+) which express the CD25 receptor (those which are CD25+) or the CD86 marker (those which are CD86+). The results represented on figures 3 and 4 were obtained in a test carried out at a different time from the test for which the results are illustrated on figures 5 and 6, which explains the difference in the order of magnitude of the results obtained.~~ Specifically, in this type of manipulation, the tests are very variable from one assay to the other, and only the results obtained in the same test are comparable with one another, hence the necessity of including, in each test, an oligonucleotide-control and also an assay of the medium alone.

Please replace the paragraph on page ~~15~~, lines 16-23 with the following:

The results [~~obtained, expressed in counts per minute, are represented in figure 7, which shows~~] show that all the oligonucleotides according to the invention are capable of inducing lymphocyte proliferation and that particularly good results are obtained when the sequences of the oligonucleotides are those identified by Seq IDs 9 to 12, *i.e.*, when cytosine separates the first two TTN_1N_2TT units of the oligonucleotide.

Please replace the paragraph on page 15, lines 27-36 with the following:

The capacity of the oligonucleotides prepared in Example 4 to induce the expression of the activation marker CD86 and of the receptor CD25 on B lymphocytes is evaluated. This evaluation is carried out using the test described in Example 3. ~~The results obtained with the oligonucleotides prepared according to Example 4 are represented on figures 8 and 9, which illustrate the percentages of B cells (CD20+) which also express the receptor CD25 (Figure 8) or the marker CD86 (figure 9).~~

Please replace the paragraph on page 17, lines 10-19 with the following:

The results obtained for each of the oligonucleotides tested ~~are represented on figures 10 and 11, which~~ indicate, for each oligonucleotide tested, the number of cytokine-secreting cells per million total cells; it is noted that all the oligonucleotides according to the invention have a result which is clearly greater than the result obtained with the medium alone or the negative control A15(S), which means that they are all capable of inducing cytokine secretion, in particular IL10 and γ interferon secretion.